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We need a plan. Sexual assault on campus is a national issue

A FIVE DAY METRO SPECIAL FOCUS metroNEWS

ISTOCK

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

Investigating the vacuum of accountability

Canada: The country without a plan.

On every campus, in every province and territory, students — and women in particular — face sexual violence and harassment.

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All week, Metro investigates this vacuum of national accountability. And we begin today, with the story of five women who pose the greatest threat yet to the status quo.

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metro NEWS
Your essential daily news

Britain will begin the process of leaving the EU by the end of March, PM Theresa May says

No laughing matter

REPRESENTATION

Comedy club's male lineup draws anger

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

A Toronto comedy club has apologized for a lack of female comics at a showcase after a poster sparked online backlash.

The Best of Absolute Comedy Showcase featured more than 30 performers over 10 nights as part of the Just for Laughs 42 festival. But only one woman was in the original lineup.

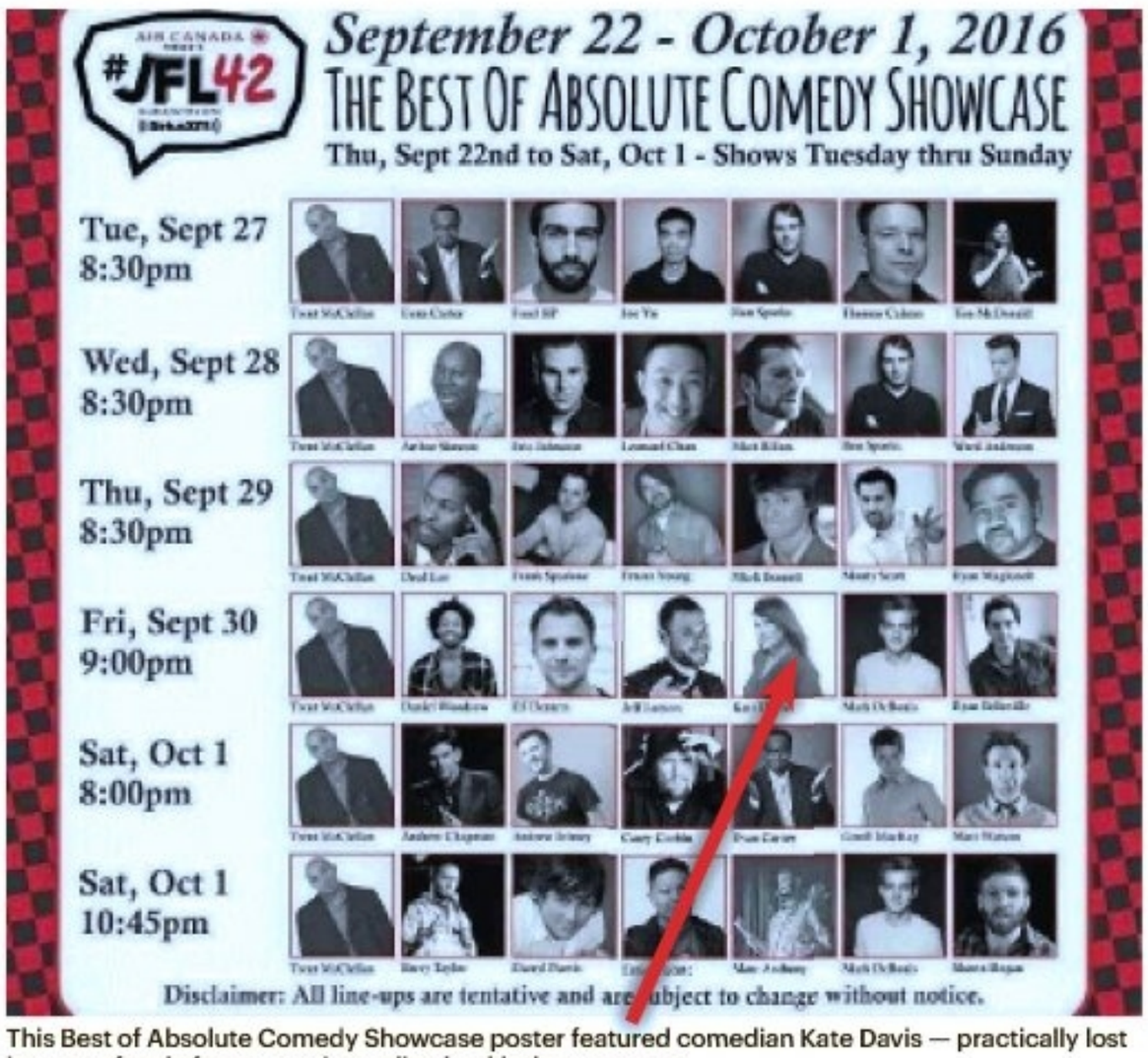
Absolute Comedy posted a statement on Twitter on Sept. 27, saying the lack of diversity was the result of cancellations.

"My intentions were to have at least one woman on each show as was the case with the last five shows we had during the first half of the festival," wrote Ryan Maglunob, who booked the talent. "I believe in being completely non-biased to who can perform on the Absolute Comedy stage."

"It was never my intention nor was this meant to be malicious, sexist or misogynistic in any way. It's just how things ended up, unfortunately."

After posting the statement, the club booked three more female comics, said Absolute Comedy owner Jason Laurans.

Criticism started when a poster for the show — which featured a picture of each performer — was circulated on social media.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Disclaimer: All line-ups are tentative and are subject to change without notice.

This Best of Absolute Comedy Showcase poster featured comedian Kate Davis — practically lost in a sea of male faces, causing online backlash. CONTRIBUTED

Standup comic and writer Rebecca Kohler called it "tone deaf."

"It's like you see that poster on Facebook and you're going to presume that the caption says 'Here is a poster of our showcase from 1985,'" she said.

The showcase drew on "mid range or higher" level comics who have worked with Absolute Comedy or were recommended by Just for Laughs 42, Laurans told Metro.

"Right now, my better comics are male heavy," he added.

"We are proud of the overall diversity of this year's JFL42 Festival," said Robyn Kaszor, festival director.

Maglunob noted that Absolute's "pool of working female comics is becoming scarce, with many moving on to other cities and clubs."

Toronto comedy writer Megan Fraser said Absolute could recruit more women from resources like the SheDot Comedy Festival.

"One of the reasons there are less woman doing standup is that there are still venues and shows that don't bother trying to make their show well rounded," she said.

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REPORT

Syphilis cases high among men: Public Health

May Warren
Metro | Toronto

Cases of syphilis are on the rise in the city, according to Toronto Public Health.

But the good news is the sexually transmitted infection is treatable.

Associate medical officer of health Dr. Rita Shahin said there were 394 cases of syphilis in Toronto through the end of June, putting the city on track to surpass the 690 confirmed cases last year, and 590 in 2014.

Almost all — 98 per cent — have been in men, and of those male cases, 89 per cent reported having sex with a same-sex partner in 2015, Shahin said. Nearly half of all people with syphilis are also HIV positive.

"It appears to be primarily an outbreak in gay men in the city," Shahin, said, adding there have been similar outbreaks across Canada, the U.S and Europe.

Syphilis can be passed on through unprotected vaginal, anal or oral sex. It can also be transmitted through sharing needles while injecting drugs.

It can be diagnosed with a simple blood test, and treated with penicillin.

Shahin said there are a number of factors for why the infection is increasing.

With better treatment for HIV, people are less likely to pass that on through sex and some stop using condoms. People are also meeting more partners though dating apps, she said.

"If people aren't going to be using condoms all the time, then they're at risk, they should get tested frequently," she said. "The best way to deal with this is testing and treatment," she said.

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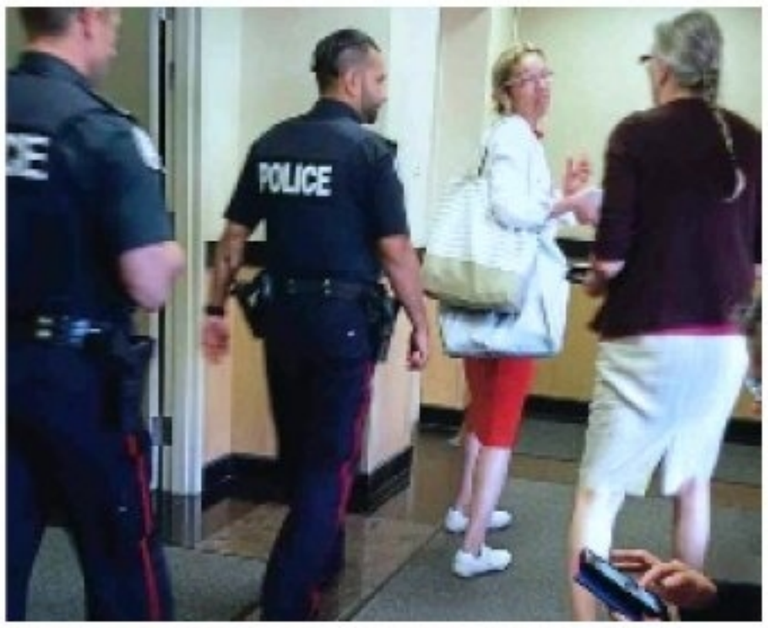

Elizabeth Tremblay is arrested at the Landlord and Tenant building on St. Clair Avenue last week. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

'She Airbnb'd my property'

RENTING

Landlord and police make allegations against tenant

After buying a 625-square-foot condo on King Street West as an investment property, Vivian Mah hired a realtor to find a "Triple AAA professional tenant" who would pay the rent on time.

"I wanted to make sure it was someone decent who would take care of my property," said Mah, who is an urban planner.

Elizabeth Tremblay seemed to fit the bill. The soft-spoken 53-year-old presented herself as an executive director of a not-for-profit organization who was relocating to Toronto from California. She submitted references, an employment letter confirming a yearly salary of about $70,000 and a credit report that raised no red flags.

The realtor said "you should go with her," and Mah did, renting the one-bedroom corner unit to Tremblay for $2,100 a month beginning May 1.

> **It has caused an impact on my health.**
> Vivian Mah

But within days, before the rent cheques started bouncing, Tremblay's tenancy turned into Mah's nightmare when building staff advised the female occupant was renting the unit to multiple individuals, probably through Airbnb.

"The moment she got in, she Airbnb'd my property, even though she's not allowed to be doing that," Mah said.

During an Aug. 3 hearing at the Landlord and Tenant Board, Tremblay, who represented herself, denied renting Mah's condo.

"I love the building. Why do you think I would Airbnb it?" Tremblay told Guy Savoie, the board's vice-chair.

Mah's condo tower at 224 King St. W., known as Theatre Park, does not permit rentals of less than three months.

"This condo I acquired through years of hard work and savings has become her free source of income," Mah said. "It worries me so much so that it has caused an impact on my health. … I can't sleep, I've lost my appetite and have heart palpitations."

Last week, Toronto police officers arrested Tremblay at the Landlord and Tenant building on St. Clair Avenue.

She was taken into custody and charged with uttering a forged document, in connection with her rental application, and three counts of false pretenses relating to bad rent cheques. She was released and ordered to appear in court again Nov. 3.

Police allege Tremblay has a history of moving into a condo, not paying rent, and using "the legal system against the landlord for months or longer, until the landlord can have her evicted by the sheriff. In the meantime, she allegedly lives free, subletting the condos to earn money while the landlord is taken advantage of," a police spokesman told Torstar News Service.

Mah said her experience is a cautionary tale for property owners and online renters in the sharing economy, which has city hall grappling with how to manage short-term rental companies.

Such "horror stories" underscore the need for regulation to ensure only licensed hosts are renting units that are safe and in compliance with all bylaws, said Thorben Wieditz, a spokesman for the coalition FairAirbnb.ca.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

OUTREACH

Islamic community preaching through actions

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Blawal Alem, left, and Safwan Choudhry are among many youth in the Ahmadiyya community looking forward to the visit of the Caliph. EDUARDO LIMA/METRO

> While the tide hasn't completely turned, we're well on the right track.
> Safwan Choudhry

Youth in the local community of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama`at are hoping the visit of the Caliph will help dispel misconceptions about Islam as the world continues to battle terrorism.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, the fifth Caliph who's been at the helm of the Islamic community since 2003, arrives in Toronto Monday as part of a month-long national tour during which he'll interact with politicians and members of his congregation.

The visit coincides with Ahmadiyya's 50th anniversary in Canada.

While expectations are high for the Islamic community for which the Caliph is the equivalent of the Pope in the Catholic church, young people want to use the opportunity to show that radicalism has no place in true teachings of Islam as a religion.

"Extremists always misquote the Qur'an for their own political agenda," said Blawal Alem, a youth in the Toronto Ahmadiyya community.

He and other youth in the community have chosen to "preach through actions," organizing food drives, community cleanups and sports activities in an effort to promote peace and harmony where they live.

Extremist organizations have targeted young people to join their ranks, and the Caliph will meet with high school and college students to spread the counter-narrative.

"Those who are influenced to join extremists are troubled individuals," said Alem. "They just need a sense of belonging."

Youth in the Ahmaddiya community have been at the forefront of campaigns promoting peaceful coexistence between Muslims and other members of society.

Initiatives such as Meet a Muslim Family and Fast with a Muslim Friend last year have helped change negative views on Islam.

"While the tide hasn't completely turned, we're well on the right track," said Safwan Choudhry, a youth leader in the community.

Tarion paydays raise eyebrows

FINANCES

Homebuyers' group paid chief more than $3.4M

The CEO of Tarion, the corporation created by the Ontario government to protect new homebuyers, earned more than $3.4 million between 2008 and 2013, including bonuses totalling more than $1 million, newly uncovered documents show.

In 2013 alone, Howard Bogach, who has been at the helm of the new home warranty program since 2008, earned a total of $700,117, including a bonus worth more than 60 per cent of his base salary. Tarion is currently under review by former associate chief justice J. Douglas Cunningham, who was appointed by the province last year to find ways to improve consumer protection.

The financial documents, publicly available in the United States — but not in Canada — list a variety of Tarion expenditures in U.S. dollars.

The Star has used exchange rates contained in the documents to convert the figures back to Canadian dollars, the currency in which the amounts were originally paid.

> I would be interested to see how they are calculated to ensure the bonus is consistent with consumer protection. Alex Patinios

Other figures contained in the documents show that Tarion spent more than $27 million on legal costs, travel, advertising and conferences over the recent six-year period.

Bogach did not comment when asked about his remuneration, but Mark Basciano, chair of Tarion's board of directors and president of homebuilder Mountainview Homes, said in an email, "We are confident that our executive salaries are in line with what other public and private sector organizations pay."

Tarion has previously refused to provide details of senior management salaries.

"What are the bonuses based on? I would be interested to see how they are calculated to ensure the bonus is consistent with consumer protection," said Toronto homeowner Alex Patinios, who spent more than three years fighting Tarion over whether certain deficiencies in his new home were warrantable.

A Torstar investigation three years ago found Tarion's online builder directory was not disclosing all instances of poor or incomplete work by homebuilders, meaning buyers could not get a full picture of builders' track records.

Thanks to documents Tarion filed with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service., the public has a window into how the private, non-profit operates in greater detail. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Housing conditions atrocious: Advocates

Rick Keegan uses dark humour to describe life in and outside his Cabbagetown rooming house, a fetid, bug-infested three-storey Victorian that attracts a roster of transients who gain entry by kicking in the front door.

"It went from crack to meth, and if you can believe it, I miss the crack days," says Keegan.

Keegan, 61, is across the street from part of a row of tall, narrow Parliament Street homes listed on the city's Heritage Registry and owned by Toronto Community Housing (TCH).

Rooming houses across the city — and what to do about them — is on the fall agenda at city hall. This month, city staff will report to executive committee on new zoning and licensing regulations for rooming houses, including 27 rooming houses operated by TCH.

Heather Wilberforce, president of the Winchester Park Residents' Association, says her organization has been patiently waiting for anything to be done to address the years of complaints about the neglect in Cabbagetown's TCH rooming houses.

Last month, TCH hosted a barbecue for tenants and area residents that included a tour and "safety audit" of several rooming houses in the area.

"I expected what I would see to be difficult but was completely unprepared for the amount of incorrigible vandalism, holes in walls for the disposing of used syringes, filthy kitchens, filthy washrooms" and an "unadulterated stench of human body odour, dirty clothing/linen, excrement and urine," Wilberforce wrote to Mayor John Tory and housing officials.

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It's fantastic with no plastic bags

BULK BARN

Take your Tupperware to pilot program

Tara Deschamps
For Metro | Toronto

Plastic bags could soon be a thing of the past for some Bulk Barn customers.

A pilot program just launched at the food company's Liberty Village location is allowing shoppers to use their own recyclable containers instead of free bags.

Millennials are the reason Bulk Barn settled on using Liberty Village for the pilot, said executive vice-president Jason Ofield.

"There's a high population of them in the area and they are very aware of what's going on with the climate and cognizant of how it impacts their shopping experience," he said.

A Toronto Bulk Barn is allowing its customers to bring their own recyclable containers in response to a push by young shoppers to be more environmental friendly. EDUARDO LIMA/METRO

The bulk food chain has put a new procedure in place to ensure everything stays sanitary. Customers' containers are inspected by staff to ensure it is clean, designed for food, resealable and reusable. Staff then weigh the container and mark it with a sticker. Once it's filled, staff subtract the container's weight to ensure shoppers aren't paying for its heft.

For those who are environmentally conscious but show up without a container, the store is selling mason jars.

Tina Wang is among those on board with the idea. A fan of Bulk Barn gummy bars and Smarties, Wang generally at least finds a way to reuse the store's plastic bags before eventually tossing them.

"But a reusable container means the bag doesn't go in the landfill," she said.

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Eliminating TTC collector booths in subway stations will coincide with the adoption of the Presto fare card system, beginning as early as July next year. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Out of the booth

TRANSIT

Subway staff to become roving customer service agents

The TTC is putting a friendlier face on its subway system next year.

As early as July, the dingy collector booths at stations will be emptied and TTC collectors will be allowed to roam free in their new role as "customer service agents," or CSAs.

When customers enter a station they will be greeted at the gates by what the agency describes as "multi-functional, highly skilled, and customer focused" agents. Each CSA will be armed with a tablet computer loaded with tourist information and apps such as Google Translate, ready to attend to riders' needs. When not helping customers, they will be tasked with inspecting stations, light cleaning work, and first-line maintenance.

TTC spokesperson Brad Ross said the change represents "a whole new approach to customer service" for the 95-year-old transit agency. "This is all about modernization," he said. "It's about the customer being at the core of all that we do."

Converting the fare collector job into a free-ranging position has been in the works for years, and will coincide with the adoption of the Presto fare card system. The cards are scheduled to replace all tokens, transfers and passes sometime next year, and will be sold via automatic vending machines, rendering human fare collection obsolete.

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LIVE WELL

Sexual Assault on Campus: A Metro Special Focus

From left: Paniz Khosroshahy of McGill University in Montreal, Ellie Ade Kur of the University of Toronto, Glynnis Kirchmeier, alumna of UBC, Tarrah McPherson of Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax and Mandi Gray of York University in Toronto. CALVIN SIT/FOR METRO, EDUARDO LIMA/METRO, DAVID RYDER/FOR METRO, JEFF HARPER/METRO

You don't know these women, but you should. They're members of the most important and organized national effort to fight campus sexual assault. Metro's Rosemary Westwood tells their stories.

The improbable five

Rosemary Westwood
Metro | Toronto

To the casual eye, there was nothing intimidating about them.

The five women, dressed for a midsummer heat wave in tank tops, dresses and short shorts, sat behind fold-out tables and passed around a single mic on a too-short cord.

It could have been any panel discussion, on any topic, on any campus across the country. The room at Ryerson University in Toronto bland and grey. The women, for the most part, were novice public speakers.

But the room was nonetheless gripped. And so, too, should be every university president in Canada.

These five women drawn from across the country, this somewhat unwilling motley crew of survivors and witnesses shut out from justice, this ragtag power group thrust together by rape and assault in a space they though would be safe.

These are the five unlikely women taking on a $40-billion university sector and demanding an end to the ineffective and alienating treatment of sexual-assault victims on campuses — the women who actually stand a chance of winning.

The most nationally known might be Mandi Gray, 28, a PhD student in sociology at York University in Toronto, whose rapist was recently sentenced to 18 months in jail (a conviction he's appealed). She spoke first, in a blend of shy body language and blunt words.

Then there's Paniz Khosroshahy, 20, a swift, staccato-talking third-year women's-studies major at McGill University in Montreal, prone to long tangents.

The poised and eloquent Ellie Ade Kur, 24, a PhD student in geography at the University of Toronto, preferred to stand up and pace, commanding the room like a Ted Talker.

There was Glynnis Kirchmeier, 28, a sharp, pragmatic alumna of the University of British Columbia, now skilled at navigating university bureaucracy.

And, finally Tarrah McPherson, 38, a former student at Mount St. Vincent University in Halifax, a mother of two and the most reluctant public figure of the five.

They had organized this event themselves in early August, calling it "What are Canadian Universities Actually Doing about Sexual Assault?" About 50 people, mostly women in their early 20s, filled a few rows of plastic chairs. It was the culmination of a week-long makeshift conference, where the women and some of their lawyers shared stories, traded legal tactics and began plans for a new, national hub of activism.

The panellists had been drawn to one another over the past few years as their stories hit the news: four women who complained to their school of sexual assault and found their schools wanting; and one woman who witnessed sexual harassment and became an outspoken activist against her school's response. Like a growing number of women, they each chose to go public with their experiences.

> **We're drawing linkages between these cases to demonstrate ... there needs to be oversight.**
> Mandi Gray

But then they went further.

Some started anti-sexual-assault organizations on their campuses. Some filed freedom-of-information requests on their schools' largely curtained bureaucratic processes.

Most significantly, three of them have filed human-rights complaints that could cause profound changes.

Previous known human-rights complaints dealing with campus sexual assault and harassment have centred on arguing that the offences themselves infringed on rights.

But McPherson, Kirchmeier and Gray are each alleging that it's their schools' sexual-assault practices, policies and protocols that discriminate against women — that the very systems supposedly designed to support victims are violating victims' human rights.

It's a unique legal tactic with no known precursor. And if any one of them is successful, it could set the new high bar for how universities handle sexual assault. But the complaints also set out a clear template that women and assault victims could copy, at any university, in any province or territory. The three cases could be just the beginning.

* * *

Gray's case was the first, filed with the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal in June of 2015. It was the culmination of what she described as a "very long battle" with York University after she was raped by a fellow PhD student that January.

"I just wanted to return to campus without having to run into him," Gray told me.

Gray's complaint alleges, among other things, a failure of school policies, a lack of any centralized place to report and get information, a lack of adequately trained staff and a requirement to enter a school-administered tribunal process without her consent. In essence, she says, York discriminates against women in its approach to redressing complaints.

In response, York has defended its support for sexual-assault survivors, including counselling, emergency financial support and housing. It's also in the midst of developing a distinct sexual-assault policy to comply with Ontario's new Bill 132.

But Joanna Birenbaum, Gray's lawyer, told Metro that her client's human-rights complaint demands much more from schools' sexual-assault policies than the new legislation requires.

* * *

Meanwhile, in Halifax, Tarrah McPherson had been facing similar institutional challenges at Mount Saint Vincent University after claiming sexual harassment by a professor. She alleges the school dissuaded her from filing a formal complaint, that support and advice was delayed and that the school did little to help her as she struggled academically. MSVU didn't have a separate sexual-assault policy at the time of her complaint; it has since created one.

"I didn't even know (a human-rights complaint) was an option for me," she said, until she did some research. In looking for precedents, she discovered Gray's case. Months later, in October 2015, McPherson's complaint was accepted by

IN-DEPTH | HUMAN-RIGHTS COMPLAINTS

Three of the five women in this story have made human-rights complaints central to their advocacy.

What are they?
By law, every Canadian has the right to personal security and freedom from discrimination. Anyone who believes their rights have been violated — by their employer, say, or school — can complain to a federal or provincial agency.

How do they work?
If the agency accepts the complaint, there may be attempted mediation or early settlement. If unsuccessful, the matter moves to a court-like tribunal.

What do they accomplish?
Tribunals can set penalties and monetary damages. The decisions also serve as precedents.

Join The Fight

Canada needs a national plan for campus sexual assault. Tell your story and pressure your MP using **#safercampusnow**

Day 1: The power of five

the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission. Part of her claim asks for the school to improve its sexual-assault policies.

• • •

When Glynnis Kirchmeier, the UBC alumna, heard about Gray's case, it gave her a few ideas. Unlike Gray, she had not experienced sexual violence. But she had played a critical and visible role in excoriating UBC for policies that impacted her fellow students.

She filed a freedom-of-information request first, looking for details on UBC's policies and privacy rules. Then she hired Clea Parfitt, a lawyer with experience litigating against universities. Together, they wrote the complaint as a kind of road map, a detailed account of what both lawyer and client believe a campus should have so as not to discriminate against women. Kirchmeier's complaint — filed in March 2016 to the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal — is also different in its third-party status. Sexual-assault survivors will testify as witnesses, if necessary, but the mere fact of the complaint means it's possible for anyone in B.C. to challenge a university's sexual-assault protocols.

• • •

For all three complaints, this fall will be pivotal.

On Oct. 24, Kirchmeier's case will enter mediation in B.C., where lawyers, UBC administrators and Kirchmeier will sit down to figure out if a deal can be struck without further litigation. (UBC wouldn't comment on specifics, beyond its participation in the process.) If that fails, the next step is to schedule a hearing.

Sometime in November, Gray's case is expected to enter a similar process. Nova Scotia's Human Rights Commission is investigating McPherson's case, and the decision about whether to move forward to a board of inquiry is expected in the coming months. (Mount Saint Vincent University did not comment on the case but will "comply fully with any investigative process.")

But the larger political project, as Gray describes it, lies in this new national network the women are forming: "We're drawing the linkages between these cases to demonstrate this is, in fact, a systemic-level issue and there needs to be some kind of oversight, an external body to hold these universities accountable."

When Paniz Khosroshahy was raped by a fellow McGill University student in Sept. 2014, she felt the lack of just such a group.

"I had no idea what was going on in other schools because there's no centralized group that's sharing all this information," she said. "That's one of the problems we want to hopefully address." She envisions a website that shares stories and educates students on the laws in their provinces.

For Ellie Ade Kur, who was sexually assaulted while an undergraduate at the University of Toronto, grassroots community organizing holds the best hope — more than revised policies or legislation — of giving sexual-assault survivors the support they need.

At that first national meeting, that hot summer evening, the women had few kind words for consent education, the posters, buttons and campaigns that swept across university campuses last month.

Gray dubbed it "the fetishization of consent education," an easy PR tactic far less expensive and time consuming than creating a comprehensive response to sexual assault.

"My attacker knew what consent was," Gray said, as the panel was winding down.

"I don't need a hashtag," Ade Kur said. "I need help."

The plan

Mandi, Tarrah, Glynnis, Ellie and Paniz have only met once face-to-face. But from separate parts of the country, they're coordinating a national movement.

1. Going public. All five are putting their names and reputations on the line, speaking to media to grow awareness.

2. Telling their stories. Khosroshahy has written columns about her assault. Gray blogs and is making a documentary.

3. FOIA requests. Using access-to-information laws, the women have requested their policies and correspondence.

4. National organization. They envision an online portal with legal info, survivor resources and advocacy.

5. Human-rights claims. By alleging school policies infringe rights on the basis of gender, and by demanding remedies, the women provide a road map to advocates.

About the series

Mon. | The power of five
The most organized and important Canada-wide effort to combat campus sexual assault comes not from the RCMP or Justice Department but from an unlikely crew of five normal young women from across the country.

Tues. | A federal vacuum
The problem is national, but solutions have been regional and parochial.

Wed. | The U.S. example
The U.S.'s federal anti-discrimination laws and directives from the White House combine to create more rigorous requirements for American post-secondary schools to protect students.

Thurs. | Dearth of data
There is no national database on campus sexual violence. We don't know how big the problem is because no one is incentivized to find out.

Fri. | The way ahead
We have a problem; we need a plan.

Join the TTC Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit

The TTC Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT) drives ongoing public participation in decisions affecting accessible transportation in the City of Toronto.

The Committee is comprised of volunteer members and reports to the Board of the TTC. Five (5) volunteer positions on the Committee are open for a three-year term. Interested applicants must attend an information session at Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen Street West, Committee Room 2.

- Thursday, October 6 from 1 to 2:30 p.m., or
- Monday, October 17 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Application forms will be distributed only to attendees after the information sessions. ASL interpreters and real-time translation (CART) services will be provided at both information sessions. If you require alternate accommodation, please contact us in advance at 416-393-4636.

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W-18 was designed as a non-addictive painkiller. It was never developed for public use, yet someone is manufacturing it. CONTRIBUTED

New threat on streets

HEALTH

Officials fear dangerous W-18 drug may take fentanyl's place

As Canada struggles with a deadly epidemic linked to the powerful painkiller fentanyl, a new and potentially more lethal threat is already emerging.

Invented in a University of Alberta laboratory in 1981, the drug known as W-18 was designed as a non-addictive painkiller. It was patented but never developed by pharmaceutical companies for public use, yet someone is manufacturing it.

When the drug was patented, testing on mice showed it was 10,000 times more powerful than morphine, according to Health Canada.

"This suggests a potentially severe risk for harm to individuals," the agency warned this summer in passing regulations that will soon make W-18 a Schedule 1 drug under the Controlled Drug and Substances Act, along with the likes of heroin and cocaine.

Health Canada noted there was "limited scientific information" available about the drug though more testing is underway.

Despite the risks, W-18 is showing up with more frequency in police drug hauls, according to Health Canada figures.

In 2015, there were just three drug seizures by Canadian police that tested positive for W-18 at Health Canada laboratories.

So far in 2016 there have been more than 30 positive tests — for an average of more than three times a month, according to Health Canada. Fifteen cases occurred in British Columbia and 14 in Alberta.

> **This suggests a potentially severe risk for harm to individuals.**
> Health Canada

But the drug has also started showing up in Ontario, where W-18 has been detected on two occasions so far this year. Both cases involved drug seizures made by the Greater Sudbury Police.

One resulted in three men — from Sudbury, Toronto and Manitoulin Island — being arrested May 12, according to a spokesperson for the force.

The emergence of W-18 and other obscure synthetic drugs is due to the squeeze by law enforcement on more prominent or easily accessible drugs, police say.

An RCMP intelligence report published this month attributed the rise in fentanyl use, and the record number of deaths and overdoses, to the removal of the painkiller OxyContin from the market in 2012.

As law enforcement now clamps down on fentanyl production, W-18 is considered to be "at the high end of the threat spectrum" to take its place, the report said.

British Columbia has declared a health emergency over the fentanyl crisis, and there is pressure to do the same in Alberta. The Quebec government has been asked to better control prescriptions of opioid painkillers for fear of being swept up in the deadly drug wave.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MILITARY

Afghan mission leaders star in new art exhibit

They were the public faces of Canada in the Afghan war. Now an exhibit of those who led the mission is on display at the Military Museums in Calgary. "The Art of Command: Portraits and Posters from Canada's Afghan Mission" is by Toronto war artist Gertrude Kearns and examines the roles of some highly ranked individuals who fought and commanded in Afghanistan, with 18 individuals featured in the exhibit. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Indigenous court first for Canada

The Mohawk band council of Akwesasne has introduced what is considered the first indigenous legal system in Canada outside a federal framework.

While First Nations band councils have been passing and enforcing legislation on reserves across the country for decades, those bylaws are either tied to the Indian Act or within a self-governance agreement with the federal government. What's special about the new court law passed by the council of Akwesasne is that it was drafted by the community.

"It's a historical moment. It's the first in Canada," said Joyce King, director of justice in Akwesasne.

Justices and prosecutors must enforce 32 laws that cover civil matters including tobacco regulations, sanitation, elections, property and wildlife conservation. Criminal matters are still settled outside the territory, in federal or provincial courts.

Akwesasne's council decided to mix aspects of Canada's justice system with Mohawk values, such as considering the talents of the offending party and using them to benefit the community.

For example, if someone spraypaints graffiti on a school wall and the offender is a great lacrosse player, the law stipulates the person can be ordered to teach students how to play the sport.

"It's not just looking at penalizing," said Bonnie Cole, Akwesasne's sole permanent prosecutor. "That's old thinking — that's outside thinking.

"This law looks at the person, what offence they committed and how they can restore balance between the (offender), the victim, and the community as well."

Women also play a big role: The director, public prosecutor and the territory's two justices are women. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Military calling on rebels to surrender

SYRIA

UN says Aleppo health services have been 'all but obliterated'

Syrian volunteers carry an injured person on a stretcher following Syrian government forces airstrikes on the rebel held neighbourhood of Heluk in Aleppo, on Sept. 30. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Syrian rebels and pro-government forces clashed Sunday on several fronts around Aleppo as the country's military command called on militants to lay down their weapons and evacuate the contested city.

A day after pro-government forces captured the strategic al-Shuqeef hill north of the city, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights monitoring group reported fierce fighting in areas near the hill and in the Bustan al-Basha neighbourhood.

The two sides also clashed in Aleppo's southern Sheikh Saeed neighbourhood.

The government's attempt to penetrate Aleppo's opposition-held eastern side has been accompanied by a relentless campaign of airstrikes by Russian and Syrian warplanes.

President Bashar Assad's forces are depending on the Russia bombardment and Iran-backed militias for support.

A spokesman for the Nour el-Din el-Zinki rebel faction told The Associated Press that foreign fighters were actively participating in the government's ground campaign. He said rebels could identify Lebanese and Iraqi militias by their flags.

An airstrike, meanwhile, targeted a rebel headquarter near the central city of Hama, killing at least six militants, the Observatory said.

The UN's humanitarian chief, Stephen O'Brien, reported that eastern Aleppo's health system has been "all but obliterated" by shelling and bombardment.

"Medical facilities are being hit one by one," O'Brien said in a statement that called for a 48-hour humanitarian pause to the fighting each week. The UN estimates 275,000 people are trapped by the government siege.

"We are in a race against time to protect and save civilians in eastern Aleppo city. They need our urgent action to bring an end to their living hell," O'Brien said.

> **We are in a race against time to protect and save civilians.**
> Stephen O'Brien

One of Aleppo's largest hospitals, located in the eastern Sakhour neighbourhood, was knocked out of service Saturday by the airstrikes, doctors and activists reported.

The Syrian military command said in a statement on state media that government forces would guarantee gunmen safe passage out of opposition-held neighbourhoods.

Russia announced a month ago that the Syrian government would give safe passage to civilians wanting to leave eastern Aleppo. Few have accepted the offer. The UN says at least 320 civilians have been killed since the government announced its offensive Sept. 22.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLOMBIA

Peace deal threatened after referendum

Colombia's peace deal with leftist rebels seemed headed to defeat as voters appeared to have rejected the deal with FARC rebels by a razor-thin margin in Sunday's referendum, less than a week after it was signed in front of heads of states. President Juan Manuel Santos said he will leave in place a ceasefire with the rebels, whose leader reiterated Sunday his group's willingness to continue working toward peace. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EGYPT

Call for virginity tests draws ire

A women's rights group has filed a legal complaint against an Egyptian lawmaker who called for mandatory virginity tests for women seeking university admission, the Al-Masry Al-Youm newspaper reported Sunday.

It quoted Maya Morsi, head of the state-sanctioned National Council for Women, as saying the complaint demands the expulsion from parliament of Ilhami Agena and a criminal investigation into his actions. She said the lawmaker was harming the reputation of Egyptian women, men and the country itself.

Agena said in an interview last week that virginity tests were needed to combat the proliferation of informal marriages, known as "gawaz orfy," between students. Virtually expense free, such marriages have become more popular in recent years because of high youth unemployment and a shortage of affordable housing.

The gawaz orfy is widely viewed as a religiously sanctioned way of having premarital sex, a taboo in mostly conservative and majority Muslim Egypt. Muslim clerics have spoken out against such marriages.

In Egypt, as in other conservative, Muslim countries, a young woman's virginity is widely seen as a matter of family honour, the loss of which could prevent her from getting married.

The military was alleged to have conducted virginity tests on 19 women arrested after troops violently broke up a protest in Cairo's Tahrir Square in March 2011, shortly after long-time President Hosni Mubarak resigned. Three months later, Amnesty International said Egypt's then-military rulers acknowledged carrying out the tests to protect the army from rape allegations. They pledged not to conduct the tests again, according to the London-based rights group. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Monday, October 3, 2016

URBAN ETIQUETTE ELLEN VANSTONE

THE QUESTION

How do I make my married friend stop asking me whether I'm seeing anyone?

Dear Ellen,

I was out with a friend who is married. I really like her, and even though we only see each other a few times a year, we always have lots to talk about, except that she always asks if I'm seeing anyone, which makes me feel bad. I feel like she is judging me, or like I'm disappointing her. But I'm afraid to say anything in case I sound defensive. How do I politely get her to stop asking me this question all the time?

Signed,
Single Lady

Dear Single,

A good marriage is a blessing. Who wouldn't want to go through life shoulder to shoulder with a trusted ally whose love and support heightens every joy and softens every blow? Many single people desperately yearn to have this someday. As do many married people.

I'm always suspicious when marrieds persistently check up on everyone else's relationship status — the phrase "misery loves company" springs to mind. In my experience, people who are happily married don't care whether anyone else is or not. They don't need to constantly monitor your progress, or lack thereof, toward coupledom in order to feel better about their own coupled-unto-death existence.

Whatever their motivation, you have every right to feel affronted, because it's rude. Even in the olden days, when marriage was mindlessly accepted as the only acceptable outcome, asking whether you're paired with anyone would have been inappropriate. Nowadays, with marriage reduced to a half-normal proposition, it's even more presumptuous and inappropriate.

You have every right to feel affronted, because it's rude.

Some people ask out of crass ignorance. They don't realize that wanting to know if you're "seeing someone" is basically asking, "Ya gettin' any?" One way to handle this is to answer, "No, not at the moment, but since we're on the subject, what about you? Are you and your partner having sex these days? I hear a lot of married people get bored with their sex lives, and I guess having children really kills it." If they take offence at this, simply tell them: "Gosh, I'm so sorry, but I'm only asking because I care about you and I want you to be as happy as I am with my insanely good, unmarried sex life!"

Worse than crass, but more to be pitied, are the unhappily married people who ask out of a subconscious need to be validated. These are the people who go though life doubting their own choices, while fearing and despising anyone who makes different choices (and being single is just as much a choice as getting or staying married; anyone with a pulse and Internet access can be in a relationship if they really want to be).

In other words, if you feel your friend is "judging" you, or that your single state is "disappointing" her, you're probably right. Chances are, she needs everyone to be — or at least want to be — married like her. You could broach it with her if you want a deeper, more honest relationship. Otherwise, let her have it. For her, pretending it's better, or luckier, or smarter to be married, and being able to lord it over poor pathetic unmarried you, might be the only thing keeping her warm at night.

Need advice?
Email Ellen:
scene@metronews.ca

Sunny ways carry a whiff of Harper days

Thomas Walkom

When Justin Trudeau's Liberals won last year's election, many Canadians were ecstatic.

Compared to outgoing PM Stephen Harper, Trudeau seemed — to these voters at least — a breath of fresh air.

The working assumption was that things would be done differently in Ottawa. As it turned out, some things were very different.

The new Liberal government negotiated a deal with the provinces to expand the Canada Pension Plan, something the Harper Conservatives were dead-set against. It also replaced Harper's universal baby bonus with one targeted to income.

It established the inquiry into murdered and missing indigenous women that Harper refused to set up. It reduced the eligibility age for full old-age security back down to 65.

But in key areas, Harperism remains.

The country got a taste of that last week when Ottawa approved a liquefied natural gas plant on British Columbia's Pacific coast, as well as a pipeline to that plant.

It was the same decision Harper would have made. And it angered the same critics.

Environmentalists pointed to the massive increase in carbon emissions that will result from the decision. Some First Nations said it will destroy the local fish habitat.

Like Harper, the new prime minister is willing to sacrifice environmental and aboriginal concerns to get things done.

Like Harper, they have relied on the provinces to curb climate change. Unlike Harper, they are talking of setting a national carbon price. But they have given no hint as to whether this national price will reduce emissions sufficiently to allow them to meet their targets.

In fact, unless any new national carbon price is higher than those already in use by Ontario, Quebec, Alberta and B.C., it won't suffice.

On terrorism and national security, the new government is resolutely Harperesque.

The Liberals promised to roll back elements of Bill C-51, Harper's addition to anti-terror laws. But so far they have done no such thing.

In fact, as Canada's privacy commissioner has noted, under the Liberals, security services are using some of the new powers apace.

Militarily, the Trudeau government kept its promise to remove Canada's fighter planes from the war in Iraq. But it compensated by tripling the number of Canadian military advisers who are on the ground in that war.

The means may differ from those employed by Harper. But the aim is unchanged.

On it goes.

The economy? Harper preached pipelines, free trade deals and foreign investment. So does Trudeau. The two have differed, though, on which pipelines to back.

They may have disagreed on when to run deficits, but both were willing to put government finances in the red in order to boost economic growth.

None of this is to suggest that Trudeau's Liberal government is identical to that of Conservative Harper. It is not.

But there is a remarkable continuity.

Thomas Walkom is a national columnist for the Toronto Star.

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Monday, October 3, 2016

New York Review of Books has published a piece that claims to reveal the identity of Elena Ferrante, prompting outrage on Twitter. "Surprised at how angry I feel about @NYBooks' unmasking of Elena Ferrante. Esp its 'justification' that her success made it 'inevitable,' tweeted author Jojo Moyes

A double scoop of social justice

INTERVIEW

Jerry Greenfield on the reasons Ben & Jerry's gets political

Liz Brown
Metro | Canada

Jerry Greenfield is well aware of the power of a scoop of ice cream.

After greeting me with a giant bear hug, the co-founder of Ben & Jerry's sets about scooping up free cups of his chocolate chip cookie dough flavour for a crowd of students before settling down to discuss the real reason he's in Toronto: climate change.

Greenfield was participating in a forum last week as part of the Enactus World Cup — an event that brought students and business leaders from around the globe together to talk about how entrepreneurship can fuel social change.

It was a crafty move to offer free treats to hungry conference attendees, perhaps even an attempt to sweeten up the people who may ask hard questions.

Indeed, after indulging, I feel a bit hypocritical pointing out his company's own carbon footprint — but I forge ahead, because nearly 15 per cent of the world's global greenhouse gases come from livestock (and the dairy cattle that produce his brand's ice cream). It's a point that needs to be addressed.

"It's interesting, when we did our analysis, we found that 42 per cent of our (CO2) impact is through dairy," he concedes.

But Ben & Jerry's has been leading the way with new technology in an effort to slash their greenhouse emissions by 80 per cent by 2020. This includes purchasing 100 per cent of its electricity from renewable sources for all its U.S. sites and using a machine nicknamed the Chunkinator at its factory in the Netherlands, which transforms ice cream byproducts into energy.

"We're not on track," admits Ben & Jerry's PR director Sean Greenwood, when asked how close they are to meeting that 2020 goal. "But that's the exciting part of it, there are renewable energy technologies being developed every day that are going to help us meet that goal."

Upon cursory examination, this all seems like another corporate feel-good mission, except it's coming from Greenfield — a guy who earlier this year was arrested for 'unlawful demonstration activities' at the U.S. Capitol, along with his sidekick Ben Cohen.

In April, they joined 300 other protesters as part of the Democracy Awakening movement to protect voting rights, reduce corporate influence on politics and ask for action on climate change, and workers' rights.

"There's not enough social justice in this world," says Greenfield when asked why he's been so vocal about so many issues.

For him, climate change is the greatest social issue of all because of the impact it has on the world's poorest nations, who depend more heavily on weather conditions for their livelihoods and successful agriculture.

"We strongly felt at Ben & Jerry's that if we were going to be involved in making this product that has such a heavy impact, we need to do whatever we can to minimize those impacts," he says.

Ben & Jerry's, which started and has its headquarters in Vermont, has always had an activist streak. In the 1980s they took a position on U.S. military spending, pushing the government to take money out of the Pentagon budget and use it for more 'human' needs like education and health care.

More recently, both Ben & Jerry were vocal in their support of Bernie Sanders' run for the Democratic nomination, with Ben even coming up with a special flavour — Bernie's Yearning — a 99 per cent vanilla flavour with a one per cent hard chocolate top.

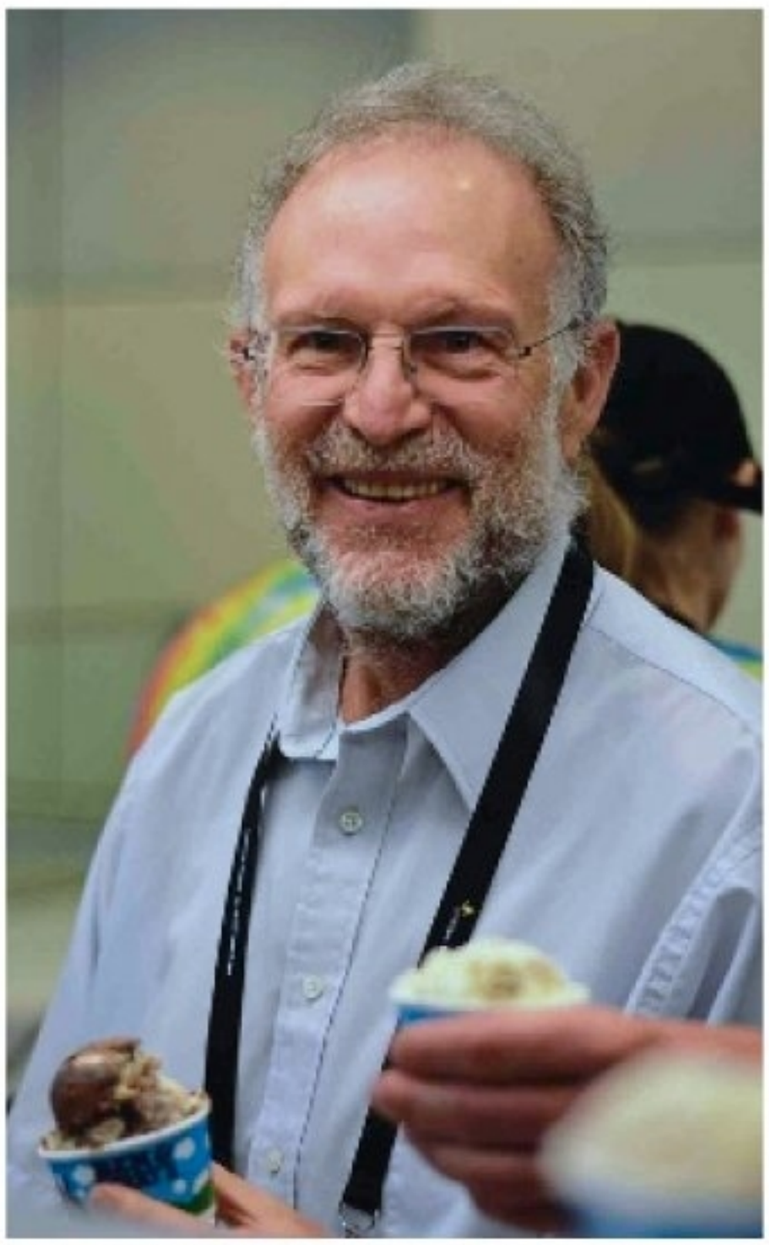
"It was NOT a Ben & Jerry's flavour," clarifies Greenfield. "But it was part of the Ben's Best Line of Flavours, which contains only one flavour. This one."

When asked if the pair would ever consider making a custom flavour for Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump, Greenfield shakes his head. "Don't hold your breath."

But back on the topic of being an activist businessman: "What ice cream really helps with is that it's allowed Ben & Jerry's to talk about pretty serious, divisive issues, but to do it in a way that is lighthearted, and over sharing ice cream together."

"It opens up people's hearts to be eating ice cream. Particularly if it's free," he says, laughing.

And once he has the people sweetened up — "they'll be willing to consider social justice."



Jerry Greenfield scoops ice cream for attendees at the Enactus World Cup in Toronto last week. LIZ BROWN/METRO

JOHANNA SCHNELLER **WHAT I'M WATCHING**

Playing cyborg an actor's dream

THE SHOW: Westworld, Season 1, Episode 4 (HBO)
THE MOMENT: Playing cyborg

Deep inside the hyper-realistic Westworld theme park, cyborg programmer Bernard (Jeffrey Wright) runs a diagnostic test on lifelike android Dolores (Evan Rachel Wood). Guests pay $40,000 per day for the privilege of raping and murdering the robots, who are then rebuilt, their memories wiped. But Dolores is beginning to remember.

"What happened to your parents?" Bernard asks.

Dolores hyper-ventilates, cries. "Reduce emotional affect," Bernard orders.

Dolores's face and voice fall. "They were killed," she says flatly.

"I can make your pain go away," Bernard says.

"The pain is all I have left of them," Dolores says. "You think grief will make you smaller inside, but it doesn't. I feel spaces opening in me, like rooms I've never explored."

"Did we write that for you?" he asks.

"I adapted it from a scripted dialog about love," she replies.

Westworld is full of complex ideas, written smoothly into the characters and plots: Playing God makes one insane. Violent delights have violent ends. It's heady stuff, often horribly sad.

But man, it must be a hoot to play a cyborg.

What could be better for a thesp than toggling between programmed character and blank slate; than playing multiple death scenes, love scenes, scenes of bravery and fear? Westworld is a fever dream about how precarious civilization is. It's an actor's dream, too.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

Evan Rachel Wood plays the lifelike android Dolores in Westworld. CONTRIBUTED

TELEVISION

Cancer drama about single mom resonates with viewers

"Our culture is so frightened to talk about death and illness — a lot of people seem to be having this connection to the show on that level," **says This Life actress Torri Higginson,** centre. CONTRIBUTED

CBC's This Life won over so many fans with its intuitive tale of a 40-something single mother juggling a cancer diagnosis with family drama, it even turned trenchant TV critics into believers.

But with a highly-anticipated second season that kicked off Sunday, the sophomore jinx is staring down the show's star.

"We're always neurotic and insecure, as any creative person is — but you always feel pressure," said Torri Higginson about her English adaptation of a hit French-Canadian series.

"The hardest thing, that first season, was to not feel the pressure of mimicking Nouvelle Adresse and to feel we cannot fail that show."

This Life didn't take long to confidently carve out its own niche from its Quebec-set companion — with this season focusing on Natalie Lawson's (Higginson) promising drug trial and her family's many personal issues — a combination that's definitely earned the affection of audiences.

"I've had people just come up and start telling me their personal stories," said the 46-year-old actress.

"I'm surprised at that openness but I'm not surprised at the connection. I think our culture is so frightened to talk about death and illness — a lot of people seem to be having this connection to the show on that level."

It's not just that progressive approach in storytelling that's working for This Life however.

The series is taking important proactive strides towards equity behind-the-scenes as well.

"There's more women behind the camera than I've seen anywhere," said Higginson, adding that the series has employed an equal number of male and female directors.

"There's a lot of women in the actual crew itself (and) that's what it should be — I don't want more women, I want as many."

That's a clear improvement from the industry Higginson started out in 24 years ago.

While the actress admits that dismantling the gender disparity is crucial, perhaps the biggest advancement she's noticed in television is the decrease of sexism.

"Truly, in my twenties, I put up with things that were atrocious," recalled Higginson.

"That has really changed. Maybe it's also changed because I'm older (but) I do actually think it's shifting – younger people are smarter and there's been evolution."

STEVE GOW/FOR METRO

Forced to film for Kim Jong-il

Steve Gow
For Metro Canada

LOVERS AND THE DESPOT

Doc tells story of kidnapped filmmaker, actress

When Ross Adam and Robert Cannan first stumbled on a fascinating true story of a famous filmmaker and actress kidnapped and stolen into North Korea under dictator Kim Jong-il's orders, they knew they'd found gold.

"It's one thing knowing a great story exists. It's another finding a way to tell the story," said Adam recently about the British directing duo's latest documentary. "Especially with North Korea being such a secretive place."

As Adam and Cannan uncover in The Lovers and The Despot, the late-autocrat of the infamously impenetrable dictatorship captured South Korean filmmaker Shin Sang-ok and his thespian wife in the 1970s and forced them to churn out 17 movies before the pair dodged the tyrant's internment.

"There wasn't a wealth of material in the beginning," recalled Adam of the challenging espionage tale that's still scrutinized today.

"It wasn't until we found there was more than one secret tape recording — there was a whole treasure trove of them that we realized this film can really be made."

The tapes in question refer to covert cassettes in which Shin recorded revealing conversations with the dictator — who, among other things, implicates his guilt in their confinement as his own personal moviemaking squad.

"You don't necessarily expect him to talk openly, particularly to people that he just kidnapped," laughed Cannan.

However as much as those recordings reveal Kim Jong-il's duplicity, they also reveal a man who was aware of his own shortcomings and completely obsessed with Hollywood movies.

Indeed, the rare audio clips unspool an unnerving portrayal of one obscure oppressor that will surely intrigue curious Canadian audiences.

"The fact that he had such an insular upbringing and the kind of warped childhood is something you might expect but it was still surprising to us," said Adam.

"While it shouldn't engender sympathy for him, there's a tragic explanation how he came to be the man he is — which is this curiously whimsical guy who is equally power hungry and willing to do anything to consolidate his power."

The Lovers and The Despot opened Friday in select theatres and is available now on iTunes.

South Korean filmmaker Shin Sang-ok, left, and actress Choi Eun-hee, right, were kidnapped by Kim Jong-il in the 1970s and forced to make 17 movies for the dictator. CONTRIBUTED

A SHADY STORY?

Many South Koreans still believe Shin was compliant with the kidnapping. "That may be because most people haven't heard key bits of the tapes," said Cannan. "But there are plenty of reasons why they would be suspicious."

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5 BEST MONEY-SAVING TIPS FROM GAIL VAZ-OXLADE

As we head into the holiday shopping season, money is top of mind for many. Metro's editors selected their favourite pieces of advice from recent **Gail Vaz-Oxlade** columns to inspire financial health in the months ahead.

1 Teach kids about 'marketing magic'

Children can't differentiate between what's real and what's marketing magic. You actually have to teach your kids that advertising exists to sell products, that special effects can exaggerate a product's operation, and that the ads don't always include all the information.

2 Host clothing swaps

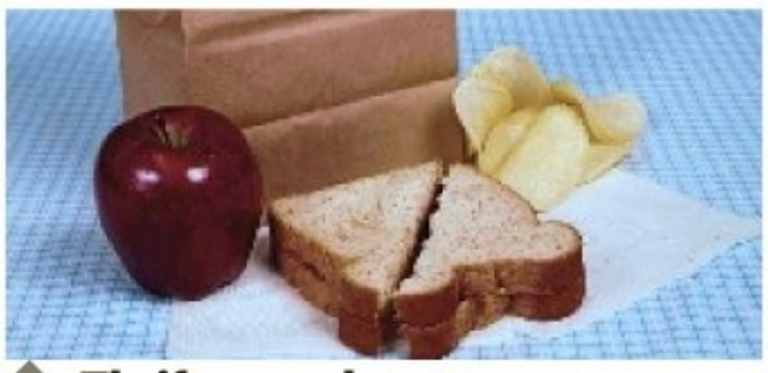
Looking for a way to get some "new" in your life without dropping big bucks? Why not hold a "new-to-you" party? Get together with some friends and exchange what they have for what you have. In the old days these were called Swap Parties; all kinds of things can be swapped.

3 Review statements

It's not enough to pay your bill. Compare the charges that come through on your statement with those you noted in your spending journal; that's the only way you'll know if you've been overcharged, if your account has been fraudulently used, or if you've been charged in error.

4 Stay out of the stores

Staying out of the stores is a good way to battle emotional spending. Breathing alleviates stress, and it's free. So does walking, singing, watching a funny video, and myriad other stress-busters that don't involve spending money.



5 Thrifty not cheap

If you've been erroneously associating thrift with being cheap, perhaps it's time to re-orient your thinking. It isn't about being stingy. It's about building prosperity through the careful management of resources

Secret shame of the middle class

Millions of adults don't have savings to cover a $400 emergency, but they don't talk about it because they are embarrassed or ashamed, according to a new book by Neal Gabler.
ISTOCK

Writer Neal Gabler broke the don't-talk-about-money taboo with an Atlantic article, The Secret Shame of Middle-Class Americans.

"The idea of not being successful financially in America is such a stigma," says Gabler, who revealed in the article that he was among the millions of adults who didn't have savings to cover a $400 emergency. "That's the reason people don't talk about it, because they take their failure personally."

"The idea of not being successful financially in America is such a stigma"
Writer Neal Gabler

Yet financial stress is epidemic. Nearly three-quarters of U.S. adults admitted feeling stressed about money, and 22 per cent reported extreme stress in a 2015 study commissioned by the American Psychological Association, "Stress in America: Paying With Our Health".

Despite its pervasiveness, most people don't disclose the financial pressures they face. In a study commissioned by Umpqua Bank, 77 per cent of respondents said they didn't talk about their money stress, often because they were embarrassed or ashamed or thought no one would understand.

"Yet, of that 23 per cent of folks who did talk about it, 70 per cent of them felt better after doing so," says Eve Callahan, Umpqua's executive vice-president of corporate communications.

Research by James W. Pennebaker of the University of Texas at Austin and others found that talking or writing about traumatic events can alleviate distress, improve immune function and lead to better health.

Even a small amount of savings can help people weather shocks. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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YOU CAN DO THIS HVAC/R INSTALLATION

A career that's hot and cold

WHY I LIKE MY JOB

Matthew Isaacs, 25, HVAC/R and Building Maintenance Assistant at OCAD University in Toronto, Ont.

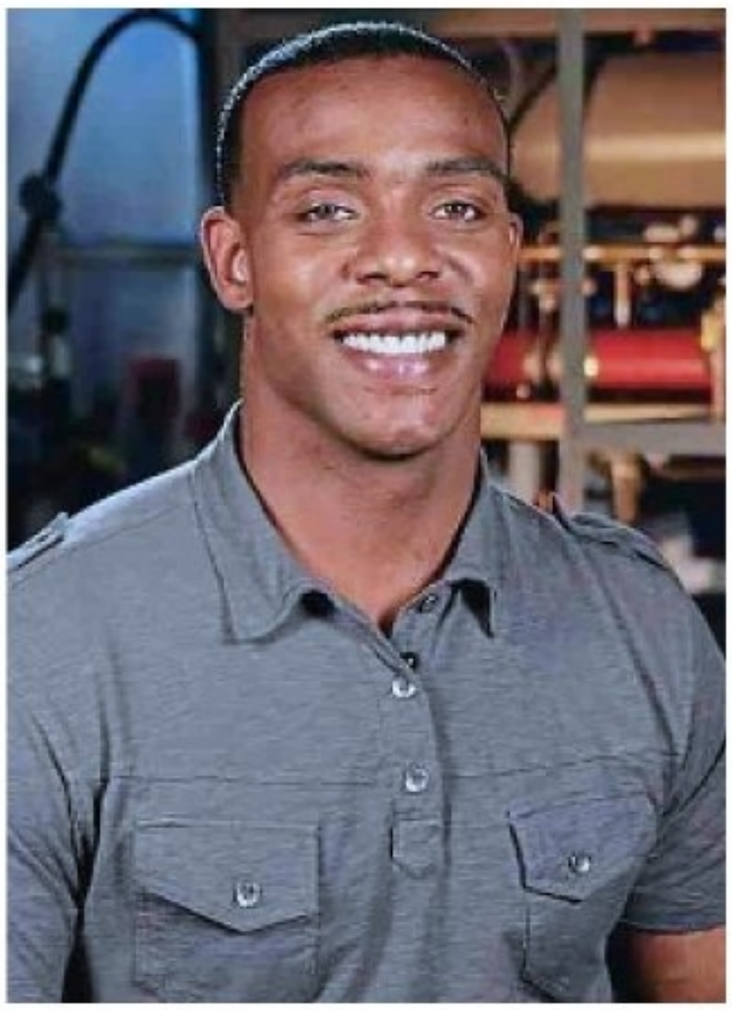
I was introduced to the business of heating, ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration (HVAC/R) through a few friends who spoke highly of their experience in the industry.

Based on their recommendations and my desire to work in a challenging and technical field, I decided to enrol in Humber College's three-year HVAC/R technology program. There, I gained valuable knowledge of engineering practices, oil codes, piping systems and computer-aided design.

Following graduation, I had the opportunity to apprentice with a company that specialized in residential air conditioner installations and duct cleaning. I've since transitioned to a role with OCAD University, where I am responsible for the general maintenance of various energy systems on campus.

I've always enjoyed piecing parts together to create a working product, which made HVAC/R a fitting career choice.

I've been fortunate to work under the guidance of several experts who have helped improve my knowledge of evolving technologies, and I'm very excited for the opportunities that lay ahead.



THE BASICS: HVAC/R Installer & Technician

$52,500

Median annual salary for an experienced technician.
$52,500

+15%

Projected rate of job growth over the next eight years.

Data for this feature was provided by payscale.com, trade-schools.net, servicecanada.gc.ca and onetonline.org

HOW TO START

The mechanical and electrical principles involved in setting up, maintaining and repairing HVAC/R systems are commonly taught in trade schools or technical colleges. Lasting an average of four semesters, HVAC/R programs provide students with a foundation of knowledge and skills to confidently design and retrofit building systems, including water and fuel supply lines, vents, pumps and air ducts. Graduates will be eligible for a head start on an apprenticeship, involving up to 7,800 hours of paid, on-the-job training before becoming a licensed journeyperson.

WHERE YOU CAN GO

There will always be a demand for heating systems, air conditioners and the experts who install them. Most trained technicians find employment with construction firms, manufacturing plants and retail service outlets specializing in equipment repairs. Opportunities also exist in government buildings — making public safety a top priority.

NEXT CAREER STEP

Those seeking career advancement may opt for a role in equipment sales or consider employment in the gas heating industry by obtaining the provincially-regulated gas fitter certification. Keeping current on industry technology will also prove beneficial, since many modern buildings are upgrading to complex, automated HVAC/R systems.

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A high-tech birth at a traditional farm

DAIRY FARMING

FaceTime and Facebook now essential tools

Owen Roberts
URBAN COWBOY

While on vacation, Tim May was able to FaceTime with his farm to advise on the birth of a calf. FARM AND FOOD CARE

Livestock farmers, like convenience store owners, have a hard time getting holidays.

If they're a big enough operation to have hired help, they might able to hand over the reins for a few days.

But in Canada, more than 95 per cent of the country's 200,000-ish farms are family farms. Some of the bigger ones have employees who are not relatives. But many count solely on their family to carry the load.

That's the way it is with fourth-generation dairy farmer Tim May, 45, of Rockwood, just outside Guelph. He, his wife Kirsten (a veterinarian), son Andy, 18, and daughter Abby, 15, maintain a very traditional — and very successful — 40-cow dairy operation, by themselves.

Like a round-the-clock convenience store, their farm, Mayhaven, is a 24-hour-a day, 365-day-a-year business. Cows need milking not once, but twice, every day. They also need feeding, mucking and sometimes help with birthing, not to mention the regular upkeep on the buildings where they're housed, fed and milked.

So for the Mays, every week is Ontario Agriculture Week. Even a small, short getaway requires huge preparation

Finally last spring, they decided to go for it. They put their collective heads down, and carved out time for a two-day visit to see relatives, near Kingston. They hired a level-headed neighbourhood kid on a co-op program named Steven Jackson to hold down the fort, and headed off down the 401.

Not exactly the Caribbean. But a road trip, nonetheless.

Then, though, came the text.

Shortly after arriving from their four-hour trek, the Mays received an alarmed message from Jackson, saying a young member of the herd was ready to deliver her first calf. Don't bother calling the veterinarian. Nature wouldn't wait.

And there was no way Tim could get back in time. So he rolled up his e-sleeves, hunkered down — and called up FaceTime. Then, for the next 20 minutes, his relatives peered over his shoulder in amazement, as May walked Jackson through the entire delivery preparation on his Smartphone.

Jackson held the phone near the cow's reproductive parts, while May told him what to do: reach into the cow's womb, check the unborn calf for a movement response and for correct positioning (to slip easily through the birth canal) and if the cow had dilated enough for delivery.

Acting on May's commands, Jackson responded with Doogie Howser-like precision.

In the end, the calf — he thinks it's the one they now call Precious — came into the world via the 3x4 screen.

Now, it's appropriate that technology would be used to deliver a dairy calf, in particular. Dairy has long been one of farming's most technical and technologically advanced sectors.

Producers such as May go to great lengths — and use many precision techniques such as highly detailed, immediate production reports on every cow — to keep their animals healthy and keep milk safe.

That means impeccable attention to detail, from start to finish — birthing, weaning, mixing the right feed rations, providing comfortable housing, and finally, properly storing milk in a bulk tank before it's shipped it off the farm to a processor, every two days. It's a tight ship, even though on the outside it may appear traditional.

May once had his eye on a veterinary career. But then his dad Paul, who still works with him from the farm next door, needed a double knee replacement, and couldn't look after things.

But it's left him with no regrets. In fact, it turned out to be the start of a 25-year journey that has seen Mayhaven rise to among the most elite dairy herds in Canada.

According to the CanWest Dairy Herd Improvement organization, Mayhaven consistently ranks in the top five per cent of the top herds in the province. That's a product of good genetics and good management: the Mays can trace every member of their modern-day herd back to their great-grandfather's original herd.

It's also a product of research, which is a strong element of Canada's dairy sector. May's been involved in several on-farm research studies led by the nearby University of Guelph, about methane gas production, insect control, pain management and more.

As well, he routinely offers Guelph veterinary students the opportunity to visit and see how a real dairy farm operates. And he's on the third update of his environmental farm plan, a peer-reviewed initiative designed to help farmers find and eliminate unsustainable practices on their farms, such as excessive water run-off from fields into rivers and streams.

May gives the public a peek at Mayhaven through his popular Farmer Tim Facebook page, which now has 9,000 followers. He wades into detailed discussions about hot consumer topics, such as raw milk ("avoid it"), genetically modified organisms ("they're harmless") and animal welfare ("check out our cows' rubber mattresses").

He also takes part in the Ask The Farmers Facebook group, populated by farmers across North America answering questions and clearing up misconceptions about agriculture.

The biggest one?

"People sometimes forget farmers have a vested interest in food safety," says May. "But we're consumers too. We have families like everyone else. We eat what you eat; we don't have a separate source of food just for ourselves. We want all food to be safe."

And any brief, precious holidays to be stress-free.

FOOD FUNDING

New farming revolution is driven by big data

Futurists predict the next food revolution will be driven by researchers armed with big data, to help make farming more sustainable than ever. But no one thought those researchers would hail from the labs, fields, and classrooms of some of Canada's agriculture and food universities — until now. Earlier this month **the universities of Guelph and Saskatchewan** received more than **$150 million** from Ottawa for massive seven-year projects focused on big data and food production.

- The University of Guelph's project is called **Food From Thought: Agricultural Systems for a Healthy Planet**. Its goals are to use big data to enhance biodiversity, produce safe and nutritious food and improve animal welfare and human health.
- **IBM Canada** is participating as a key industry partner. It's helping secure cloud-based storage for the reams of information that will be gathered through super computing, and from precision agriculture technology that has already started appearing on Canadian farms.
- In Western Canada, the **University of Saskatchewan** is leading a worldwide network of water researchers using big data for a project called **Global Water Futures**. New science being developing there will help farmers plan for crops that can handle climate extremes and other conditions that affect water. "Floods kill, but also destroy farms and farmland and disrupt agricultural production, while droughts threaten production and the viability of farms and communities," says program leader John Pomeroy.

Support for these projects is coming from the **Canada First Research Excellence Fund**, which helps top Canadian post-secondary institutions turn their key strengths into world-leading capabilities. Thirteen projects worth more than $900 million were funded.

OWEN ROBERTS/URBAN COWBOY

Owen Roberts is a Guelph-based journalist who writes extensively on food trends and agricultural research. Follow him @TheUrbanCowboy

URBAN CULTURE ASKS AGRICULTURE

Q Are there antibiotics in meat?
I'm curious and a bit confused about the labels around antibiotics and food lately. I figured the best place to start is to ask a farmer why they even use antibiotics.

MICHELLE JAELIN,
REGISTERED DIETITIAN, TORONTO

A It's a simple question with lots of complicated answers.
I work hard caring for my animals, which includes keeping them healthy. A veterinarian can prescribe antibiotics if sick chickens need treatment, but that's rare. If we do have to treat, we follow strict withdrawal times to ensure no residues are in our meat. My family eats the same food yours does and we take our commitment to caring for chickens and producing healthy, affordable food seriously.

ANDREA VELDHUIZEN,
CHICKEN FARMER,
NIAGARA REGION

FARM&FOOD Care
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www.FarmFoodCare.org

That's a good start, thanks for asking.
Let's continue the conversation.
@FarmFoodCare

metro SPORTS

The Philadelphia 76ers gave no timetable for the return of No. 1 pick Ben Simmons who will likely need surgery for a broken bone in his right foot

Blue Jays go wild for playoffs

MLB

Toronto clinches berth in one-game battle with O's

Aaron Sanchez said he didn't know — and didn't care — that the Blue Jays had already clinched a spot in baseball's post-season.

Toronto still had a chance to host the AL wild-card game, and Sanchez wanted the win.

"I wasn't ready to go home," he said after the Blue Jays beat the Boston Red Sox 2-1 in the regular-season finale on Sunday to claim the AL's top wild-card berth. "For it to come down to (Game) 162, and me being out there ... there was a lot at stake in that game. And it was in my hands."

Sanchez took a no-hitter into the seventh, and Troy Tulowitzki singled to break an eighth-inning tie. Roberto Osuna retired David Ortiz on a weak nubber in front of the plate on the final regular season at-bat of his career, and then got Jackie Bradley Jr. on a groundout with two on to finish the game.

The Blue Jays had a muted celebration on the field, then popped champagne in the visitor's clubhouse at Fenway Park.

"I'm (usually) straight-faced," Tulowitzki said. "But that was fun out there."

Toronto clinched a spot in the post-season when Detroit lost to Atlanta 1-0 earlier Sunday evening. With their win in Boston, the Blue Jays earned the right to host the Baltimore Orioles in a one-game playoff on Tuesday.

Jose Bautista sprays Michael Saunders with champagne after the Blue Jays clinched a wild-card berth on Sunday in Boston.
MADDIE MEYER/GETTY IMAGES

SUNDAY In Boston

2	1
BLUE JAYS	RED SOX

The Red Sox will start their AL Division Series against the Indians on Thursday in Cleveland.

"We've been able to win on the road and that's where our playoff journey begins," Boston manager John Farrell said.

Pitching with Jose Fernandez's initials on his hat in tribute to the Marlins pitcher who died last week, Sanchez held Boston hitless until Hanley Ramirez's disputed home run with two outs in the seventh. The ball sailed over the foul pole above the Green Monster.

> **"You have to give credit to Sanchez ... That's the best I've ever seen him.** David Ortiz

Sanchez tried to wave the ball foul and then yelled to the umpire, "No way!" But the replay upheld the original call.

"For me, it looked foul," he said, but added that it didn't matter as long as the Blue Jays won.

Xander Bogaerts followed with a single — the only other hit allowed by Sanchez, who lowered his ERA to 3.00 and clinched the AL title. In all, Sanchez (15-2) allowed one run, walking two, striking out six and hitting a batter.

The Blue Jays took the lead back in the eighth against Brad Ziegler (2-4) when Tulowitzki singled with runners on first and third. Toronto's other run came on Devon Travis's solo homer in the fifth.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

FALL OUTLOOK

AL wild-card game: Baltimore at Toronto, Tuesday

NL wild-card game: San Francisco at New York Mets, Wednesday

ALDS 1: Boston vs. Cleveland

ALDS 2: Baltimore/Toronto vs. Texas

NLDS 1: L.A. Dodgers vs. Washington

NLDS 2: San Francisco/N.Y. Mets vs. Chicago

CFL

Als triumphant in new coach's debut

Rakeem Cato threw four touchdown passes to help make Jacques Chapdelaine a winner in his debut as a CFL head coach as the Montreal Alouettes defeated the Toronto Argonauts 38-11 on a wet Sunday afternoon.

Kenny Stafford, with two, Samuel Giguere and B.J. Cunningham had TD catches, while Giguere also ran one in and Anthony Fera kicked a field goal for Montreal (4-9), which ended a four-game losing run and won for only the second time eight games.

SUNDAY In Montreal

38	11
ALOUETTES	ARGOS

Lirim Hajrullahu booted three field goals for Toronto (5-9), which has lost three straight. Quarterback Drew Willy's offence was held without a touchdown in his first start for Toronto.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL RIVALRY REKINDLED The Canadiens' Artturi Lehkonen, left, attacks the Maple Leafs' goal against defenceman Morgan Rielly and netminder Garret Sparks during preseason action at Air Canada Centre on Sunday night. For the story, go to metronews.ca. RICK MADONIK/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

NBA

Raptors stand arm in arm for anthems

True to their word, the Toronto Raptors took a stand on Saturday by locking arms during the national anthems prior to a pre-season game against the Golden State Warriors.

> **"If we can help in any type of way in a positive way ... that's beneficial.**
> DeMar DeRozan

Players and staff stood arm in arm during both the Star-Spangled Banner and O Canada at Vancouver's Rogers Arena, with some bowing their heads.

The Raptors said earlier this week that they planned to join the growing chorus of professional athletes speaking out against police brutality and racial injustice in the United States.

The Raptors won the game 97-93. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bills bring Pats back to Earth

NFL

Buffalo lets air out of Gillette Stadium to claim rare win

SUNDAY In Foxborough

16	0
BILLS	PATRIOTS

Tom Brady won't return to an undefeated team after all.

But following the Buffalo Bills' surprise 16-0 shutout win at New England Sunday, he will come back to an AFC East that is suddenly tighter.

Buffalo's win was a continuation of an offensive turnaround that seemed improbable after an 0-2 start.

The change in direction began with the firing of offensive co-ordinator Greg Roman and the promotion of assistant Anthony Lynn. Buffalo now has back-to-back wins over Arizona and New England.

"For sure, we're confident in coach Lynn," running back LeSean McCoy said. "We're just falling in love with the calls that he's making."

It was the Bills' second win in 16 visits to Foxborough, Mass., and a big reason is quarterback Tyrod Taylor who has suddenly found confidence.

He had trouble reading coverages and throwing the deep ball earlier in the season, but didn't exhibit those issues in picking apart a veteran New England defence.

Buffalo's defence also handed the Patriots their first shutout loss at Gillette Stadium.

It was something to build on even with Brady serving the final game of his four-game "Deflategate" ban.

The first hits were thrown before the game, when Bills safety Robert Blanton and others were involved in a shoving match with Pats quarterback Jacoby Brissett and receiver Malcolm Mitchell.

Cornerback Nickell Robey-Coleman said he and other Buffalo players felt disrespected when the Patriots twice ran through their warmups.

Several punches were thrown when a shoving match erupted near the sideline. The altercation appeared to begin when Brissett was jogging along the field and was shoved by Bills safety Robert Blanton.

Brissett didn't stop, and Mitchell retaliated by shoving Blanton. Blanton responded by punching Mitchell in the chest and head-butting him, which led to several other players and assistant coaches getting involved before it was broken up.

"When he did that, it kind of put a fire up underneath us," Robey-Coleman said. "We came out there with some fire. And it was like, 'Nah, we ain't going to let nobody disrespect us no matter where we're at.'"

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MORE SCORES

THURSDAY
- Bengals 22, Dolphins 7

SUNDAY
- Jaguars 30, Colts 27
- Falcons 48, Panthers 33
- Redskins 31, Browns 20
- Bears 17, Lions 14
- Raiders 28, Ravens 27
- Seahawks 27, Jets 17
- Texans 27, Titans 20
- Cowboys 24, 49ers 17
- Rams 17, Cardinals 13
- Saints 35, Chargers 34
- Broncos 27, Bucs 7
- Chiefs at Steelers*

MONDAY
- Giants at Vikings

*LATE SUNDAY

Jacoby Brissett of the Patriots fumbles the ball on a hit by the Bills' Zach Brown on Sunday in Foxborough, Mass. JIM ROGASH/GETTY IMAGES

GOLF

Americans end Ryder Cup drought

This wasn't about being maybe the best team ever assembled. The Americans were simply a team, and they finally won back the Ryder Cup.

Phil Mickelson led the Americans behind the scenes. Patrick Reed powered them with his passion on the golf course. And it was Ryan Moore, the final captain's pick who wasn't even on the team until a week ago Sunday, who delivered the cup-clinching point at Hazeltine in Chaska, Minn.

Moore finished eagle-birdie-par for a 1-up victory over Lee Westwood, and the celebration was on.

"When put in the right environment, the U.S. team brought out some amazing golf," Mickelson said. "And we're bringing back the Ryder Cup because of it."

Ryan Moore GETTY IMAGES

There was no meltdown like Medinah four years ago, when the Americans blew a 10-6 lead under captain Davis Love III.

Europe never really had a chance.

Reed outduelled and outshouted Rory McIlroy for a 1-up victory, and by then the back end of the scoreboard was filled with American red.

The final score was 17-11, the biggest rout for the United States since 1981.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Ricciardo wins, Rosberg builds lead in Kuala Lumpur
Daniel Ricciardo led a one-two finish for the Red Bull team at the Malaysian Grand Prix on Sunday while third-place finisher Nico Rosberg extended his Formula One championship lead after Mercedes teammate and title rival Lewis Hamilton suffered an engine failure while leading the race.

Rosberg is now 23 points clear in the standings.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Atletico goes top of La Liga
Atletico Madrid won early Sunday and then watched a humbling defeat for Barcelona, and yet another disappointing draw by Real Madrid, to take the lead in the Spanish league for the first time this season.

Atletico dominated 2-0 at Valencia, while Madrid drew 1-1 at home with Eibar and Barcelona conceded three goals in 11 minutes in the first half in a 4-3 loss at Celta Vigo. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Truex gets Chase win No. 2
Martin Truex Jr. dominated Sunday at Dover International Speedway for his second win in the first three Chase races. Tony Stewart finished 13th and was knocked out of contention.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mario super again for Nice
Mario Balotelli scored a late winner for Nice in a 2-1 win over Lorient on Sunday then was sent off for a second yellow card in a harsh decision as Nice returned to the top of the French standings. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

PREMIER LEAGUE

Spurs convincing in slowing Man City

Manchester City's winning start to the English Premier League is over — and the title favourites might just have seen close up their biggest rival for the trophy.

Producing a clinic in high-octane pressing, Tottenham hounded City into submission in a 2-0 victory at White Hart Lane that consigned Pep Guardiola to his first loss in 12 games. Six of those matches had come in the Premier League, and had been won at a canter.

It was the kind of all-round performance that the Spurs produced for large spells of last season under Mauricio Pochettino before collapsing late on in their pursuit of eventual champion Leicester.

That was the first time the Spurs contended for the league title in a generation and they are proving it wasn't just a one-off.

Mauricio Pochettino GETTY IMAGES

After seven games, second-placed Tottenham is the only unbeaten team in the Premier League, still hasn't conceded a goal in open play and is now just one point behind City.

In a dominant first-half display, Tottenham went ahead through Aleksandar Kolarov's own goal in the ninth minute before Dele Alli added a second as City's defence was overwhelmed by the home team's energy and movement.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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3	1	6	7	9	4	8	5	2
2	8	7	6	5	3	9	1	4
9	4	2	1	6	7	5	3	8
8	7	1	3	4	5	2	6	9
5	6	3	9	8	2	1	4	7
6	2	9	4	3	1	7	8	5
1	5	4	8	7	9	6	2	3
7	3	8	5	2	6	4	9	1

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RECIPE Chinese 5-Spice Chicken Tray Bake

PHOTO: LEILA ASHTARI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

This tray bake is next level deliciousness with warm and fragrant Chinese 5-Spice.

Ready in 20 minutes
Prep time: 1 hour
Cook time: 20 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 3 Tbsp olive oil, plus extra for onions
- 4 - 5 garlic cloves, pressed
- 1 Tbsp rice vinegar
- 1 Tbsp brown sugar
- 1 tsp Chinese 5-spice
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 6 large skinless, boneless chicken thighs
- 2 onions, peeled and sliced
- 1 tsp fresh chopped cilantro

Directions

1. Combine olive oil, garlic, rice vinegar, brown sugar, 5-spice and salt in a large resealable plastic bag. Add chicken thighs; seal and coat chicken with sauce. Chill at least 1 hour or overnight.

2. Preheat oven to 400. Slice and coat onion in a bit of olive oil. Spray baking sheet with non-stick cooking spray. Scatter onion slices on baking sheet.

3. Remove chicken from refrigerator and arrange on top of onion. Roast until chicken is cooked through, about 20 minutes.

4. Remove tray from oven and let cool for a few minutes. Sprinkle chicken and onion with cilantro and serve warm.

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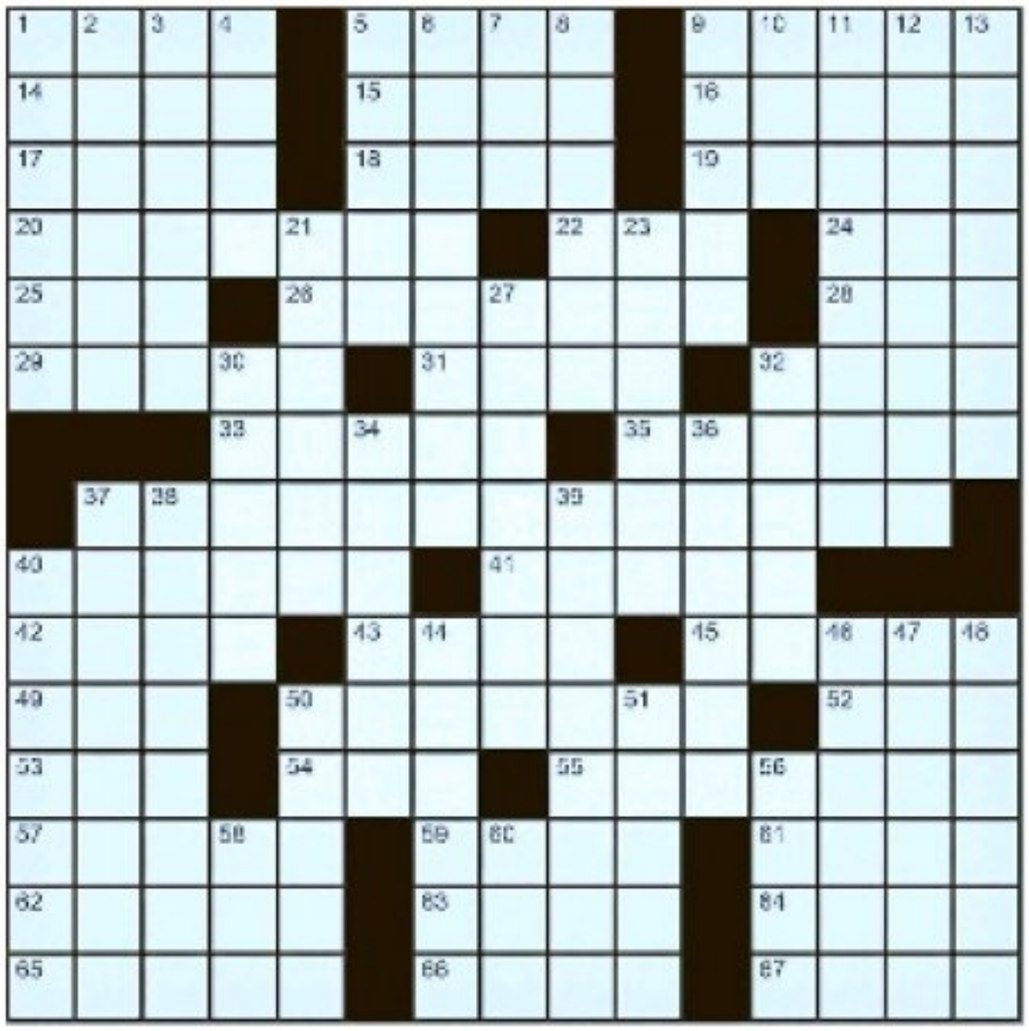
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Ben Affleck movie
5. From way off
9. Cry-ily complain
14. Gradually withdraw
15. Capital of Latvia
16. Macho guy
17. Border on
18. Army __ (Military kid)
19. Enter the data
20. Late Baroque: Ornate styles of the 18th-century
22. Suppositions
24. "R.O.C.K. in the _ _ _" by John Mellencamp
25. Expression for Homer Simpson
26. Gallery's draw
28. Agnus __ (Lamb of God)
29. After-showering mist
31. Five-star
32. Sharon of "Boston Public"
33. Myrrh, for example
35. Slopes
37. Montreal-born/Hamilton-raised rocker of platinum hit "Mama Let Him Play": 2 wds.
40. Dar es __ (Tanzania city)
41. Angry, in days of yore
42. Ed of "Daniel Boone"
43. Splotch
45. Do a professor's work
49. Peacock network
50. Newly minted word or phrase
52. Green Day drummer Mr. Cool
53. On the __ (Precisely punctual)
54. Supermodel Carol
55. Spiral-tusked Arctic whale
57. 'Parliament' suffix
59. Pare
61. Memorization method
62. TMZ.com founder Harvey
63. Loaf
64. Yahweh's 'yeah!'
65. "Did you __ __ keys anywhere? I still can't find them."
66. Pottery piece
67. Father, in Quebec

DOWN
1. Junos and CCMAs
2. Start the computer again
3. Unpolished/tactless
4. Particular preposition
5. Ann __, Michigan
6. Health crisis care: 2 wds.
7. Classic range cooker company
8. Conserve the food
9. Eggs-whipping gadget
10. Female octopus
11. Insolent
12. Cause the stomach to be upset
13. Necessitates
21. Photographer's tool
23. Wet plaster mural
27. VictoriousOhVictorious! Community of northeastern British Columbia
30. Tapestry wall†hanging
32. Workshop machine
34. Icon
36. "The __" by The Box Tops
37. Boisterous country festivity
38. Not compulsory, as some surgery
39. Citify
40. Tropical resort footwear
44. Small
46. Not away from one's abode: 2 wds.
47. Volcano opening
48. La Belle __ (1864 comic operetta by Jacques Offenbach)
50. Astute/shrewd
51. Nintendo enthusiast
56. Shawl
58. Point
60. Uncooked

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Remember to learn whatever you can so that you are performance-ready for a career peak in 2018. Whatever you do now will pay off then.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Many of you are forced to rely on your own resources now. You can do this! Furthermore, this will strengthen you for a career peak four years from now.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
This is a fun-loving, playful time for you. Nevertheless, your relations with spouses, partners and close friends will be tested in the next year.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
Continue to work hard at your job even though you might feel overwhelmed. You can handle what you must do. You will get recognition for this in 2018.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
This is a busy time for you. Enjoy schmoozing with others. Likewise, enjoy redecorating where you live and entertaining at home.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
One reason you want to boost your income now is you are doing everything you can to secure your home and make it a safe refuge for your family. Focus on repairs and home improvements.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
This is a powerful time for you. Be aware that many of you will have a change of residence or job during the coming year.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
For the next month, your ability to convince others is amazing. Use this to your advantage, especially if you write, sell, market, teach or act.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
For a year now, you have been sailing in a new direction after having given up so much during 2012-2015. You are on a path to define the new you!

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
This continues to be a time of downsizing and letting go of what is no longer relevant in your life. This month, friends are supportive to you. Use their help if necessary.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Matters related to inheritances and shared property will go forward with more clarity now. If you need help from bosses, parents and VIPs, ask for it.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
This is a time of harvest for your sign. You see now what is working and what is not. If possible, reward yourself with some fun travel, because you deserve it.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

			9		6	8		
			7			6		
		2		4		7		3
	1				9	5	7	
	7	6	3				8	
4		9		1		3		
		3			8			
		1	2		5			

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